

The Secondary School Students Perspectives on Values (Adana Sample from Turkey)

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to present the Turkish students' perceptions of the attitudes of values and the values difference between grades and genders. One hundred and four students from Adana (Turkey) State Secondary school in 2014-2015 academic session participated; these participants were adolescents attending the 7th and 8th grades of the school. The study group comprises of 51 female students and 53 male students Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) were administered; the RVS was adapted to Turkish in order to enhance validity and reliability of results. Chi-square test for two variables was used for the diagnosis of the students' attitudes of values. The Chi-square test for two variables results revealed that 10 items indicated the existence of statistically significant differences between students' genders and their attitudes of values. In addition, the results indicated the existence of statistically significant differences between the students' grades and the attitudes of values for 2 items.

Keywords: values, morals, Rokeach value survey (RVS), educational psychology, and developmental psychology.

1. Introduction

Morals in the concept of education and educational psychology, when the findings of developmental psychology are taken into consideration, are stated as follows: The internalization of norms, justice of awareness, withdrawal or abandonment of the needs and interests (Çiftçi, 2003).The secondary school students' perception was analyzed according to the RVS items in order to examine the differences between students' perspectives in relation to values in terms of class and gender at the secondary level.

The following questions have been sought to answer in this frame (main aim).

1. Is there a relationship between the perspectives on students' values at the student gender level?
2. Is there a relationship between the students' perspectives on values at the class level?

In this research, students' perspectives on values are examined to know whether there exist any differences at both class and gender variable level.

2. Value

Schwartz (1994) clarified values that guide individual or other social presence of life serving as principles, which significant levels differ; values are desirable beyond the relevant conditions (Ulusoy and Arslan, 2014).

Value is the distinctive aspects (Türkeri, 2014). Concepts such as legit, right, wrong, etc. explain value, which means to implement the behaviour of a process. If behaviours exhibited depend on certain moral principles, then value is the characteristic of commitment to such principles. Principles direct attitudes and internalize attitudes (Ulusoy and Dilmaç, 2014). Commitment to principles is universal (Türkeri, 2014). Yapıcı and Zengin (2003) also reported the need to examine value for the understanding of people's attitudes and behaviours. Emre and Yapıcı (2015) stated values eliminate the complexity of emotion in decision making and a reduction function for instability. When individuals make choice, values offer the opportunity to be more active. Therefore, values guide to people and also they help people to be effective for making selection between both desirable and undesirable decisions. Schwartz tried to develop the views of Rokeach. For instance; if honesty is important for an individual, he or she has less hesitation when he or she forget to pay the production in shopping cart. If honesty is not important for an individual, he or she hesitates for paying the products which are not paid in the shopping cart in addition decision making process can be longer and more complex (Villar, 2008).

According to Schwartz (1992) values are the criteria which people use to select and justify the actions for evaluation themselves and events. Individual blends the values of the society with their own personality and individuals make the values of the society as a unique structure for themselves (Yapıcı, Kutlu and Bilican, 2012; Yapıcı, 2004). Arsenian (1943) implied individual values can be changed in educational process (Yapıcı, Kutlu and Bilican, 2012). Yapıcı and Yürük (2015) expresses that undoubtedly outside the school environment is remarkable importance for the choice of the individual values. However, formal education and formal training process have important role for the choice of the individual value formation and also variation. Although education adopts the current values, one of the education aims is the current values are cross-examined by the students. Thus, it is inevitable that the displacement value and the transfer the current value which substitutes the existing value. On the other hand it is inevitable that new meaning can be installed existing values. The formation process of the individual values continues at various levels of formal education.

According to Rokeach (1973), "values" are divided in two value categories: terminal and instrumental values. Terminal Values such as: family security, salvation, a world at peace, a sense of accomplishment, wisdom, equality, a world of beauty, true friendship, an exciting life, inner harmony, self respect, happiness, mature love, freedom, a comfortable life, social recognition, national security and pleasure while Instrumental values such as: independent, forgiving, courageous, honest, intellectual, broad-minded, ambitious, imaginative, obedient, self controlled, polite, logical, capable, cheerful, loving, responsible, clean and helpful. *Terminal values* consist mainly of values such as security, happiness and equality, whereas *Instrumental values* consist of values used to achieve terminal values and desired results. Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) evaluated values as individual and cultural in two dimensions. Özensel (2003) reported that values are defined as a tendency to favour a particular situation. Values are the source of behaviours and the source of understanding better judgments. Values show wishes, preferences and desired and undesired situations (Ulusoy and Arslan, 2014). Expectations are guided by the individual values. Although values can be taught and learned, transferring values seems difficult today than in the past. In the past, many values supported by the community can be transferred through life; but today, only experience is not enough anymore. It is required that both school and families put more effort because factors, which change and affect the child's value system, are diversified.

3. Morals

Morality calls for judgments about being right or wrong, and those judgments comprise of character and integrity of a social unit (Selznick, 2008). Morals uphold the happiness of individual's value system of the society. Ethics correspond to the subcategory of philosophy related to morality and moral values (Cevizci, 2014). The most common form of morality can be described as living a good life. It is believed that morality is based on values of free will and choice. The importance of the task and its evidence of necessity is the same in the history of "Task Philosophy". In addition, pulling the moral to material from spiritual field shows the importance of moral (Bertrand, 2001). According to Trautner (1991), an ongoing and continuous process needs to be monitored in ethics and value education. Individual educational activities need to be reorganized according to the findings of scientific studies. Therefore, moral education, as stated in the concept of education where the findings of developmental psychology are taken into consideration, are the internalization of norms, justice of awareness, withdrawal or abandonment of needs and interests (Çiftçi, 2003).

4. Method

This research is a correlation scanning model and a quantitative study. General scanning models involve the examination of two or more variables; single scanning model involves examining variables one by one; and relational model involves the examination of two or more variables in order to determine their relations (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014; Frankel and Wallen, 1993). Chi-Square test was used for two variables in this study. This technique tests whether a significant relationship exist between the two classes (categorical) variables. The relationship between the two variables shows that the level of response in one variable differs from the other variable levels (Büyüköztürk, 2014).

4.1. Study group

The participants were 104 students from Adana (Turkey) State Secondary school in 2014-2015 academic session. The study group comprises of 51 females and 53 males (53 7th grade and 51 8th grade students).

4.2. Data collection tool

Data were obtained with the items in RVS, which was adapted to Turkish by Çalışkur and Aslan (2013). According to Anderson (1988), likert scale is one of the multi-substance scales because many substances are found in the scale; many items vary based on the score of the individual's answers. Therefore, a higher score measured indicates a high level of structure. Such scale is called collective scale (summated rating scale). Participants give answer to every situation with likert scale; and the answer options are presented as "strongly agree," "agree," "undecided", "disagree" and "strongly disagree" (Balcı, 2015). A total of thirty-six items (18 terminal and instrumental values each) were applied to the study group as a likert type scale. Students stated their views as: "It is very important for me", "It is important for me", "I am undecided", "It is a little bit important for me", and "it does not matter for me".

4.3 Data analysis

Since the study group consists of 104 students (more than 50 participants), thus the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov were examined as normality. According to the results, $p=0.00$, but <0.05 in the related chart of "normality" was seen since Kolmogorov-Smirnov test did not provide the normality assumption.

5. Findings

There were significant relationship for item 5, item 9 and item 31 when the result of two variables in the chi-square test was examined accordingly using *gender* as the independent variable level. Pore numbers exceeded 20% for items 1, 3, 14, 22, 27, 33 and 36; comments were made with cross-tables. Although the relationships were not significant, there was a relation when likelihood ratio (probable rate) and cross tables were taken into consideration. Hence, we take into account the cross tables; according to the gender relations (difference) which were significant ($p < 0.05$).

Item 5: Wisdom

($X^2_{(3)} = 8.40$, $p < 0.5$) according to these results, it could be said that there was a significant relationship; 52 (52.9%) female students stated as "it is very important for me", and 34 (64.2%) male students stated their views as "it is very important for me".

Item 9: An exciting life

($X^2_{(3)}=19.60$, $p=0.00<0.5$) according to the result, there was a significant relationship; 43 (81.1%) male students expressed their opinions as "it is not very important for me", and 21 (41.2%) girl students stated their opinion as "it is not very important for me".

Item 31: Capable

($X^2_{(3)} = 7.96$, $p = 0.47 < 0.5$) According to the results which were analyzed, we found a significant relationship; 35 (68.6%) female students expressed their views as "it is very important for me", while 40 (75.5%) male students explained their views as "it is very important for me". In addition, when the cross-table was taken into consideration, there is a significant relation with the level of gender independent variable; ($X^2_{(3)} = 7.96$, $p=0.47<0.5$); 35 (68.6%) female students expressed their views as "very important", 16 (31.4%) female students expressed their views as "important" and 40 (75.5%) male students declared their opinions as "very important", 8 (15.1%) male students expressed as "important", 4 (7.5%) male students said "I'm undecided", 1 (1.9%) male students stated "a little bit important".

Item 1: Family security

When the cross-table was examined, 46 (90.2%) female students stated their views as "it is very important for me" and 53 (100%) male students stated their views (all male students) as "it is very important for me".

Item 3: World at peace

When the cross-table was examined, 44 (86.3%) female students stated their views as "it is very important for me" and 38 (71.7%) male students stated their views as "it is very important for me".

Item 14: Freedom

38 (74.5%) female students stated their views as "it is very important for me" and 46 (86.8%) male students stated their views as "it is very important for me" when the cross table examined about "freedom".

And also, according to the cross-table, 38 (74.5%) female students reported their opinions as "it is very important for me" and 46 (86.8%) male students declared their views as "it is very important for me".

Item 22: Courageous

According to the cross-table examined, 50(98.0%) female students express that their perception as "it is very important for me", and 46 (86.8%) male students declares that their views as "it is very important for me".

Item 27: Obedient

When the cross-table was examined, 18 (35.3%) female students reported their opinions as "it is very important for me", 13 (25.5%) female students said that "it is important for me", 27 (50.9%) male students declared their views as "it is very important for me" and 9 (17.0%) male students expressed their views as "it is important for me".

Item 33: Loving

When the cross-table was examined, 44 (86.3%) female students reported their opinions as "it is important for me", 1 (2.0%) female student stated as "it is a little bit important", 6 (11.8%) female students stated their views as "it is important for me", 37 (69.8%) male students declared their views as "it is very important for me", 8 (15.1%) male students expressed their views as "it is important for me", 4 (7.5%) male students expressed their views as (undecided), 1 (1.9%) male student said "a little bit important" and 3 (5.7%) male students said "it is not important for me".

Item 36: Helpful

When the cross-table was analyzed, 47 (92.2%) female students stated as "it is very important for me", 4 (7.8%) female students said "it is very important", 40 (75.5%) male students stated "it is very important", 5 (9.4%) male students said "it is important", 3 (5.7%) male students said "undecided", 1 (1.9%) male student said "I am undecided" and 4 (7.5%) male students stated as "it is not important". There was significant relationship in item 27: "Obedient" when the result of two variables chi-square test was examined using grade (class) level as dependent variable level. Although the relationships were not significant in item 5: "Wisdom", there was a relation when likelihood ratio (probable rate) and cross tables were taken into consideration. Therefore, we take into consideration the cross tables based on the class variable, where relations (difference).

Item 27: Obedient

According to the results of chi-square test, there is a significant difference in Grade 8 for Item 27: Obedient; ($X^2_{(4)} = 13.49$, $p = .09 < 0.5$). When the results were analyzed, 14 (26.4%) 7th grade students stated as "it is very important for me", 16 (30.2%) 7th grade students said "it is important", 6 (11.3%) 7th grade students stated "undecided", 4 (7.5%) 7th grade students said "a little bit important", 13 (24.5%) 7th grade students said "it is not important"; while, 31 (60.8%) 8th grade students said "very important", 6 (11.8%) 8th grade students stated as "important". 5 (9.8%) 8th grade students said "undecided", 2 (3.9%) 8th grade students stated "a little bit important", and 7 (13.7%) 8th grade students said "it is not important".

Item 5: Wisdom

There is a difference in Grade 7, although not a significant difference. Thirty 7th grade students expressed their views, as "it is very important to me", 22 7th grade students stated their opinions as "important for me", 31 8th grade students expressed their views as "very important for me", 16 8th grade students stated their opinions as "important for me".

6. Conclusion

This research was administered in a secondary school in Adana city centre where 104 7th and 8th grade students participated (A total of 51 female and 53 male students). Students' opinions were analyzed with the items of Rokeach value inventory, which was adapted to Turkish and studied for reliability and validity analyzed by Çalışkur and Aslan (2013). Students stated their views: "It is very important for me", "It is important for me", "I am undecided", "It is a little bit important for me", and "it does not matter for me". RVS differentiated according to grade (class) variable for only two items; however, RVS items seemed to differentiate for ten items based on gender variable. This finding is important in educational and developmental psychology literature.

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